

From “I Have a Dream”

<p><u>I have a dream that one day<sup>1</sup> this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: “We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal.”<sup>2</sup></u></p>	<p><b>Persuasive Speech</b></p> <p><sup>1</sup> King repeats the phrase “I have a dream...” five times in this section. This repetition structures this part of the speech, giving it rhythm and momentum. With each repetition, the speech gains power.</p>
<p><u>I have a dream that one day<sup>1</sup> on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.</u></p>	<p><b>Evaluate Persuasion</b></p> <p><sup>2</sup> King quotes the Declaration of Independence to support his point that all people should be treated equally. King’s choice of this revered document lends weight to his argument because it suggests a promise that was made to all Americans, but not kept.</p>
<p><u>I have a dream that one day<sup>1</sup> even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.<sup>3</sup></u></p>	<p><b>Persuasive Speech</b></p> <p><sup>3</sup> King transforms the physical heat of Mississippi into a vivid image of oppression. His use of parallelism (“sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression”) intensifies the description.</p>
<p><u>I have a dream<sup>1</sup> that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.<sup>4</sup></u></p>	<p><b>Evaluate Persuasion</b></p> <p><sup>4</sup> For most people, the idea that children are being treated unjustly has strong emotional impact. King’s reference to his own “little” children makes his argument personal. In addition, his repetition of the hard “c” sound (“color; content; character”) makes this passage even more memorable.</p>
<p><u>I have a dream today.<sup>1</sup></u></p>	<p><sup>4</sup> For most people, the idea that children are being treated unjustly has strong emotional impact. King’s reference to his own “little” children makes his argument personal. In addition, his repetition of the hard “c” sound (“color; content; character”) makes this passage even more memorable.</p>